

Appl. No. 10/017,513
Amendment dated May 4, 2004
Reply to Office action of March 29, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Please note applicant's new mailing address:

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Applicant's phone and fax numbers remain the same.

Applicant has amended the specification to correct the misspelling in the abstract as noted by the examiner and to remove an extra period at line 12 on page 4.

Applicant notes the examiner's objection to the specification as failing to provide sufficient antecedent basis for the "and/or" limitations in regard to Claim 1 "e) a monitor circuit responsive to said selected signal of b) and/or said processed signal of c) to provide audible and/or visible monitoring thereof". Applicant respectfully disagrees with the objection and points out that the description of the preferred embodiment of the invention provides adequate antecedent. As one example at page 13, lines 15-16 the specification provides that audio "signal(s)" may be monitored, the use of signal(s) referring to one or the other or both (or more) thus providing antecedent for the "and/or" language of Claim 1. Applicant however has amended the specification at page 14 to verbosely incorporate the "and/or" language of the claim.

Similarly the examiner has objected to insufficient antecedent basis for the "and/or" limitations in Claim 2, line 2 and Claim 5, line 2. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejection as it is believed the specification does provide sufficient antecedent basis however the specification is amended at page 10 to verbosely incorporate the "and/or" language of these claims.

It will be clear to the person of ordinary skill in the art from the teachings of the specification that element d) of Claims 1 and 4 require at least two distinct known forms of outputs

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of the processed signal of c) however for the purpose of avoiding disputes with unscrupulous copyists who would seek to ignore those teachings, applicant has added the word "distinct" to element d) of claims 1 and 4.

The examiner has rejected Claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Eggers U.S. Patent No. 5,910,996. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejection for the following reasons.

With respect to all claims, and especially independent claims 1 and 4, they specify a plurality of outputs (element d) to output the processed signal (from element c) in known form. In Eggers the plurality of output circuits pointed to by the examiner (52, 53 and 55) do not match the claim language. In Fig. 4 of Eggers there is only one output, from 55. If 52 and 53 are considered outputs, then they output two different signals, not the same signal as called for in the claims. In Eggers Figure 3 there are two outputs, from 42 and 43, however again they output different signals, not the same signal as called for in the claims.

With respect to Claims 2 and 5, the examiner points to Eggers inherently disclosing the use of parameters established by a manufacture or operator. Applicant respectfully disagrees. While various parameters are described, and will be known, to the person of ordinary skill in the art from the specification, the applicant's claim term "parameters" as used in claim 2 has specific meaning with respect to its operation and interaction with the other claim elements. Specifically the selector for selecting the audio signal of b) and the signal processing section of c) operate in response to said parameters such that the selecting of b) and/or the processing of c) may automatically change in response to at least one signal present on one said input of a). The examiner's suggestion of the volume levels being preselected does not meet this claim language. For example the volume levels do not change the selection of the input and/or change the processing in response to an input signal.

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At best the volume level changes the level of a selected input signal, but that is not the same as changing the volume in response to the input signal.

Regarding Claims 3 and 6, the claims specify a different processed signal than does Eggers. In particular the processed signal of Claim 3 and 6 is output in a plurality of output circuits as previously described whereas in Eggers the signal from the mixer 54 is only output from a single amplifier 55.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment, the attached pages captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

Applicant wishes to thank examiner Grier for the thoughtful and detailed office action of March 29, 2004. The clarity of the reasoning for the rejections has greatly assisted applicant in preparing this response.

In that the application is believed in form for allowance, further action in that respect is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Fax No. (703) 872,9314 on May 04, 2004.



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VERSION WITH MARKING TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

In the abstract:

A method and apparatus is described for electronic signal monitoring and conversion to differing form. The preferred embodiment includes automatic selection of an audio signal from a plurality of input signals which may be in differing form, and conversion and processing of the selected signal to place it into one or more desired form to be output for further use. Further operations include delaying and mixing a plurality of signals may take place automatically or under operator control. ~~Visual~~ Visual and/or audible monitoring of the signal(s) is also shown.

Please delete the second period at the end of the sentence on Page 4, line 12,.

Please add the following new paragraph after the paragraph ending at Page 10, line 18:

In keeping with the description herein, parameters which are established in manufacture and/or by an operator may be utilized such that selecting an audio signal which may be present at one of the inputs and/or the signal processing section operate in response to such parameters in order that such selecting and/or processing may automatically change in response to at least one signal present on an input.

Please replace the paragraph at page 14, lines 13 – 16 with the following amended paragraph:

One of ordinary skill will recognize from these teachings that ones or all of the elements 26 through 40 may be eliminated or provided in duplicate if desired, in order to reduce cost or provide

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audible and/or visible ~~visual~~ monitoring of multiple programs, selected input signal(s) and/or processed signal(s) and/or with multiple types of monitors and/or outputs in order to fit a particular system or requirements

In the Claims:

Claim 1. An audio monitoring and signal processing apparatus including in combination:

- g) a plurality of audio signal inputs,
- h) a selector for selecting the audio signal which may be present at one of said inputs of a),
- i) a signal processing section responsive to process said selected signal of b) to provided a processed signal,
- j) a plurality of output circuits, each responsive to said processed signal of c) to output said processed signal in a distinct known form,
- k) a monitor circuit responsive to said selected signal of b) and/or said processed signal of c) to provide audible and/or visible monitoring thereof.

Claim 2. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 further including:

- l) parameters which are established in manufacture and/or by an operator wherein said elements b) and c) operate in response to said parameters such that the selecting of b) and/or the processing of c) may automatically change in response to at least one signal present on one said input of a).

Claim 3. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2 further including a mixing element operable to mix a second signal with said selected signal of b) as part of providing said processed signal of c).

Claim 4. An audio monitoring and signal conversion method including in combination:

- a) providing a plurality of audio signal input connections,

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- b) selecting one of the audio signals which may be present at one of said input connections of a),
- c) processing said selected signal of b) to provide a processed signal,
- d) outputting said processed signal of c) ~~to output said processed signal~~ in a plurality of distinct known forms,
- e) monitoring said selected signal of b) and/or said processed signal of c) in audible and/or visible form.

Claim 5. A method as claimed in claim 4 further including the step of:

- f) utilizing parameters which are established in manufacture and/or by an operator such that the selecting of step b) and/or the processing of step c) may automatically change in response to at least one signal present on one said input connection of a).

Claim 6. A method as claimed in claim 4 or 5 further including a mixing step operable to mix a second signal with said selected signal of b) as part of providing said processed signal of c).

Claim 7. An audio monitoring and signal conversion method including in combination:

- a) providing a plurality of audio signal input connections,
- b) selecting one of the audio signals which may be present at one of said input connections of a),
- c) processing said selected signal of b) to provide a processed signal,
- d) outputting said processed signal of c) in a plurality of distinct known forms at least one of which is analog and at least one of which is digital,
- e) monitoring said selected signal of b) in audible and/or visible form.

Claim 8. An audio monitoring and signal conversion method including in combination:

- a) providing a plurality of audio signal input connections,
- b) selecting one of the audio signals which may be present at one of said input connections of a),

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- c) processing said selected signal of b) to provide a processed signal,
- d) outputting said processed signal of c) in a plurality of distinct known forms at least one of which is analog and at least one of which is digital,
- e) monitoring said processed signal of c) in audible and/or visible form.

Claim 9. A method as claimed in claim 7 or 8 further including the step of:

- f) utilizing parameters which are established by an operator such that the selecting of step b) and the processing of step c) automatically change in response to at least one signal present on one said input connection of a).

Claim 10. A method as claimed in claim 7, 8 or 9 further including a mixing step operable to mix a second signal with said selected signal of b) as part of providing said processed signal of c).